# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1400
ANSWERED ON:29.10.2008
BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN
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**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

(a) the current status of bilateral relations between India and Pakistan;

(b) whether the Indian Prime Minister had recently met Asif Ali Zardari,President of Pakistan on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York;and

(c) if so,the details of discussion held and the steps taken by both the countries to improve bilateral relations?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) India is committed to peace,friendship and good neighbourly relations with Pakistan.India has nevertheless continuing and serious concerns with regards to Pakistan and in this regard has reiterated the importance of fulfillment of commitments contained in the Joint Statements of 6th January 2004 and 24th September 2008 that Pakistan would not permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) Both the leaders agreed to work for an early and full normalization of relations between India and Pakistan,on the basis of mutual respect,peaceful coexistence and non-interference.The leaders decided that:

(i) The Foreign Secretaries of both countries will schedule meetings of the Fifth round of the Composite Dialogue in the next three months which will focus on deliverables and concrete achievements.

(ii) The ceasefire should be stabilized.To this end,the DGMOs and Sector Commanders will stay in regular contact.

(iii) A special meeting of the Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism will be held in October 2008 to address mutual concerns including the bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul.

(iv) The expansion of people to people contacts,trade,commerce and economic cooperation provides an effective platform to develop and strengthen bilateral relations.Towards this end it was decided to:

(a) Open the Wagah-Attari road link to all permissible items of trade.

(b) Open the Khokrapar-Munabao rail route to all permissible items of trade.

(c) Continue interaction between the Planning Commissions of both countries to develop mutually beneficial cooperation including the energy sector.

(d) Commence cross-LoC trade on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot roads on October 21,2008.

(e) Modalities for the opening of the Skardu-Kargil route will be discussed soon.